



# **Flexi-schooling Policy**

## **October 2024**

**Approved by the Trust Board on: 14<sup>th</sup> October 2024**

**To be reviewed: 14<sup>th</sup> October 2025**

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## Statement of intent

DDAT understands that, under some circumstances, parents may wish for their child to receive some of their education in school, and some of their education at home.

While there is no automatic right for a pupil to receive flexi-schooling, the Trust and each of its school aims to work with parents where this may be necessary, in order to reach an arrangement that is mindful of the pupil's best interests and allows the pupil to receive part of their education within the school, and the other part of their education at home.

When a pupil is flexi-schooled, there is always a risk that the child may not receive the broad and balanced education that they should and are entitled to receive. **The Trust and its schools** adhere to the measures outlined within this policy and expects parents of flexi-schooled pupils to do so as well, in order to ensure that every pupil, whether flexi-schooled or not, receives a broad and balanced education.

## Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (as amended)
- The Education Act 1996
- DfE (2019) 'Elective home education'
- DfE (2024) 'Working together to improve school attendance'
- DfE (2024) 'Keeping children safe in education 2024'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- SEND Policy
- Parental Attendance Agreement
- Attendance and Absence Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

## Roles and responsibilities

The Deputy CEO is responsible for:

- Ensuring the school has robust procedures in place for monitoring pupil attendance, attainment and progress.
- Working with the headteacher, the Trust Safeguarding Lead and any other key stakeholder to establish efficient flexi-schooling procedures, ensuring agreements are approved before flexi-schooling begins.
- Reviewing this policy on an annual basis for approval by the Trust Board, ensuring that it remains adequate and appropriate for the needs of the school.
- Putting arrangements in place for when the provider of the alternative activity, as part of flexi-schooling, notifies the school of any absences of individual pupils.

The headteacher is responsible for:

- Working with the Executive Team to establish efficient flexi-schooling procedures, ensuring agreements have been approved before flexi-schooling begins.
- Granting requests for flexi-schooling where they are satisfied the parents are committed to providing adequate support for their child while they are being educated off-site.
- Signing the relevant contracts before flexi-schooling begins.
- Ensuring the pupil's progress, attendance, behaviour and the effectiveness of any intervention programmes are monitored.
- Ensuring parents receive timely updates on their child's attendance and progress, e.g. through progress reports.
- Collating evidence from parents to inform pupil assessments.
- Providing parents with copies of weekly planning to ensure they can plan flexi-day activities for pupils.

- Withdrawing a flexi-schooling agreement if it is felt that any of the required conditions are not being met at home.
- Reviewing this policy on an annual basis, ensuring it remains adequate and appropriate for the needs of the school.

Parents/carers are responsible for:

- Keeping clear records or diaries of the activities and learning experiences that happen on flexi-schooling days.
- Providing copies of records or diaries, pupil's work, evidence and activities to the headteacher and bringing these to termly parents' evenings.
- Attending termly group meetings with other parents/carers and school staff regarding flexi-schooling to share good practice.

## **Definitions**

Flexi-schooling is providing a full-time education by means of a mixture of provision.

This means that parents/carers may make a request for their child to receive part of their education and the school and part of their education at home or in other settings. Pupils receiving part of their education at the school through a flexi-schooling arrangement must still receive full-time education overall, and it is parents'/carers' responsibility to ensure that this duty is met.

While parents/carers are free to request flexi-schooling arrangements, there is no legal entitlement for requests for flexi-schooling to be accepted. This will be considered on an individual basis for each request.

## **Requesting flexi-schooling arrangements**

Flexi-schooling arrangements will only be considered upon the official request of someone who has parental responsibility for a child – flexi-schooling arrangements will never be initiated by the school.

If a parent/carer wishes for their child to receive flexi-schooling with part of their education delivered at the school, this request will be required to be made in writing to the headteacher. The headteacher will then arrange an in-person meeting with the parent/carer of the child to discuss the proposed flexi-schooling arrangement further.

The decision to allow a flexi-schooling arrangement to take place is solely at the discretion of the headteacher, and there is no right of appeal against the headteacher's decision.

Flexi-schooling arrangements will only be given if the headteacher is satisfied of the following:

- The parent/carer is committed to providing suitable education for their child overall and is aware of their legal duty to ensure their child is educated full-time
- The education that the parent proposes to provide off-site will be of good quality, and the child will receive a broad and balanced education overall

- The arrangement will not have a significant adverse impact on the child's development, e.g. in terms of social interaction
- The arrangement will be able to work practically in terms of work set for the child
- There are no safeguarding concerns related to the welfare of the child surrounding the arrangement

If the school agrees to a flexi-schooling arrangement, an agreement will be prepared. This agreement will contain information on the following:

- Which areas of education each party will provide
- The responsible person for overseeing the non-school part of the education
- What flexibility there will be regarding special events at school which fall outside the pupil's usual attendance, e.g. school trips, assemblies
- What flexibility there will be regarding special events at home which fall inside the pupil's usual attendance, e.g. museum trips
- What arrangements will be made for pupil assessment
- Any SEND and associated provision
- To what extent the national curriculum will be followed
- Anything else the parent/carer and school agree to include
- Which school sessions or lessons the pupil will attend.

Both parties will also sign an agreement stating that they understand that the school is responsible for the pupil's welfare while they are at school, and the parents/carers are responsible at all other times.

Flexi-schooling will not begin until these documents have been signed by the parents/carers and the school.

## **Attendance and educational performance**

The school will monitor progress, attendance, behaviour and the effectiveness of any intervention programmes, in line with the existing procedures for full-time equivalent pupils.

Attendance at school will be mandatory for pupils receiving flexi-schooling for all sessions where it has been agreed the pupil will be present. Where pupils are receiving the off-site parts of their education, they will be officially entered onto the school's admissions and attendance registers. Periods where the pupil is receiving education other than at the school will be marked on attendance registers as authorised absences in line with the Attendance and Absence Policy.

The pupil's parent/carer will be responsible for informing the school where their child will be absent from on-site provision and where they will not be attending schooling off-site – the school will mark the attendance register in line with the Attendance and Absence Policy for absences from either provision.

The school will update parents/carers on their child's attendance and progress at school at least **termly** through:

- Progress reports.

- Formal parent and school meetings.
- Informal communications.

The school will expect the parents/carers to act on advice provided and work in partnership with the school to ensure that pupils make appropriate academic progress.

The school retains the right to withdraw an agreement at any time, e.g. if the school feels that any of the required conditions that underpin the agreement are not being met at home.

## **The school's role in flexi-schooling**

For all flexi-schooling arrangements entered into by the school, the school will:

- Monitor the attendance levels of pupils at school.
- Track and evaluate the attainment and progress of pupils at school.
- Use any evidence parents collate at home to inform their assessments of pupils – attainment and progress evidence will be shared between parents/carers and the school.
- Provide parents/carers with copies of **weekly** planning to ensure that they can plan flexi-day activities to support their child's learning.

The school is not responsible for the parts of education that are delivered to the pupil when they are off-site, as the quality and suitability of home education is the responsibility of the LA; however, the school will work with the LA wherever necessary to ensure the pupil's overall education is suitable and that the proper attendance codes are used.

The school will not conduct any health and safety risk assessments of the pupil's home; however, if there is evidence that a child is not safe at home, or a concern is raised either by a member of staff or the child themselves, the DSL will be informed immediately, and the school will follow the processes outlined in the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

## **Termination of a flexi-schooling agreement**

With agreement from the Deputy CEO, the school will set a formal review for flexi-schooling arrangements where:

- Pupils' attendance at school falls below **97** percent.
- Pupils' attainment, performance or progress is falling below the accepted standard in areas of the pupil's education for which the school has responsibility.

Where the school believes that any of the required conditions that underpin the agreement are not being met, e.g. the pupil is not making the expected progress, the school will withdraw the flexi-schooling agreement.

**Two weeks'** notice will be given to parents/carers following a decision to terminate the agreement.

If parents/carers do not agree with the school's decision, they will be asked to attend a meeting with the headteacher to discuss the reasons behind the decision.

If they still disagree following the meeting, parents/carers will be offered the opportunity to make a complaint regarding the school's decision. All complaints will be handled in accordance with the Complaints Procedures Policy.

## **Monitoring and review**

This policy is reviewed on an annual basis by the DDAT Trustees and the headteacher. The next scheduled review date for this policy is **October 2025**.